

Message Text

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PAGE 01 THESSA 00337 271613Z

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AMCONSUL MILAN

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

UNCLAS THESSALONIKI 0337

FOR EB/CBA/OCA AND COM/OIM/OED/BIC

EUR/GRK AND EUR/EX

E.O.11652:N/A

TAGS: BEXP, APER, AFSP, GR

SUBJECT: COMMERCIAL BUDGET PACKAGE

REF: STATE 112965

1. SUMMARY: OVER PAST 2 YEARS CONGEN HAS SHARPLY INCREASED ALL CATEGORIES OF COMMERCIAL SERVICES TO EXPLOIT OPPORTUNITIES IN NORTHERN GREECE WHICH FASTEST GROWING INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL AREA OF COUNTRY. IN PREPARING "MINI CCP" PROGRAM FOR NORTHERN GREECE, CONGEN BELIEVES THAT FULFILLMENT OF BASIC PROGRAM OBJECTIVES REQUIRES AND JUSTIFIES ASSIGNMENT OF FULL-TIME AMERICAN COMMERCIAL OFFICER AT THIS POST. END SUMMARY.

2. GIVEN STAFF LIMITATIONS, CONGEN PROGRAM HAS BEEN PRIMARILY TRADE OPPORTUNITY-ORIENTED. OVER PAST 2 YEARS, POST HAS SUBMITTED 270 TELEGRAPHIC OPPORTUNITIES UNDER TOP PROGRAM. IN ADDITION, NUMBER OF AGRICULTURAL TOS, INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES, TENDERS AND WTDRS HAS ALSO RISEN. WHILE NO ADS REQUESTS RECEIVED HERE TO DATE, POST HAS SUBMITTED SERIES OF AIRGRAM MARKET SURVEYS ON AREAS
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PAGE 02 THESSA 00337 271613Z

MERITING SPECIAL ATTENTION. IN ADDITION POST HAS INSTITU-

TED QUARTELY ECONOMIC REPORT WITH EMPHASIS ON MAJOR PROJECTS. FURTHER INNOVATION IS PUBLICATION OF MONTHLY COMMERCIAL NEWSLETTER IN GREEK TAILORED TO NEEDS OF NORTHERN GREEK MARKET. FIRST EDITION PUBLISHED JUNE 1974 VERY WELL RECEIVED AND POST BELIEVES NEWSLETTER JUSTIFIES APPROX 130 MAN-HOURS INVOLVED. IN ADDITION TO USUAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY CONGEN IN MOUNTING AND STAFFING PAVILION AT THESSALONIKI INTERNATIONAL FAIR, POST HAS RECOMMENDED AND PROGRAMMED SERIES OF SPECIAL MISSIONS INCLUDING USDOC ANTI-POLLUTION AND METAL-WORKING SPECIALISTS, STATE OF VIRGINIA SWINE MISSION, NATIONAL RENDERERS' ASSOCIATION SEMINAR, AND AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY AND POLLUTION CONTROL CATALOG EXHIBITS. FURTHER INNOVATION FOR THIS POST HAS BEEN ORGANIZATION OF BUYER MISSIONS TO RELEVANT EVENTS AT MILAN TRADE CENTER INCLUDING 43-MAN N.GREEK DELEGATION TO JEEP AT VERONA AG SHOW IN MARCH AND 15-MAN GROUP TO JUNE BIO-MEDICAL EXHIBIT.

3. CONGEN NOW ATTEMPTING TO SYSTEMATIZE FOLLOW-UP MONITORING OF RESULTS OF COMMERCIAL PROGRAM BUT UNABLE WITH PRESENT STAFF OF 3 STATE-FUNDED OFFICERS TO PROVIDE PRECISE FIGURES ON DOLLAR VALUE OF RESULTING SALES OR NUMBER OF NEW AGENCIES. ESTIMATE, CONSERVATIVELY, HOWEVER, DIRECT SALES RESULTING FROM PROGRAM IN PAST YEAR OF DOLLARS 5-10 MILLION AND AWARE OF 15-20 AGENCY AGREEMENTS CONCLUDED OR IN FINAL NEGOTIATION.

4. CONGEN BELIEVES THAT MAINTENANCE AND SYSTEMATIZATION OF TRADE PROMOTION ACTIVITY REQUIRES ASSIGNMENT OF FULL-TIME COMMERCIAL OFFICER. PRESENT FSO-4 POL/ECON OFFICER ABLE DEVOTE MAXIMUM 40 PER CENT OF TIME TO TRADE PROMOTION INCLUDING SUPERVISION OF SINGLE FSL-5 COMMERCIAL ASSISTANT AND PART-TIME FSL SECRETARY. CURRENT PRIORITY OBJECTIVES FOR FY 75 INCLUDE SYSTEMATIC FOLLOW-UP PROGRAM, FULLER IDENTIFICATION AND REPORTING ON INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES, IMPROVEMENT OF CONGEN COMMERCIAL NEWSLETTER, CLOSER COORDINATION WITH EMBASSY ATHENS COMMERCIAL SECTION, AND INCREASED SUPPORT FOR BUYER MISSIONS TO RELEVANT U.S. TRADE EVENTS. CONGEN ALSO PROMOTING FURTHER USDOC SPECIALIST VISITS AND LARGER UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 THESSA 00337 271613Z

AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY MISSION, PER RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THESS A-16 , 4/11/74, AND BELGRADE 8304, 6/5/74. CURRENT TARGET AREAS HERE INCLUDE LIGHT AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY AND ANIMAL FEED INDUSTRY, FOOD PROCESSING AND PACKAGING, TEXTILE AND SPINNING, AND LIGHT INDUSTRY OF ALL KINDS.

5. TO FULFILL ABOVE OBJECTIVES AND CARRY OUT SYSTEMATIC

MARKET ANALYSIS, POST BELIEVES ASSIGNMENT OF FSO-6 OR FSS
EQUIVALENT ESSENTIAL. WHILE REFTTEL DIRECTED TO FY-76 BUDGET,
POST RECOMMENDS CONSIDERATION THIS ASSIGNMENT AS OF
OCTOBER 74. CONGEN HAS REVIEWED RECOMMENDATION ABOVE
WITH EMBASSY ATHENS AND DIRECTOR OF EB/CBA/OCA LAKAS
WHO NOW HERE ON INSPECTION VISIT. BOTH SUPPORT
RECOMMENDATION AND BELIEVE VOLUME OF COMMERCIAL WORK AND
EXPORT MARKET PROSPECTS FULLY JUSTIFY PROPOSED ASSIGNMENT.
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